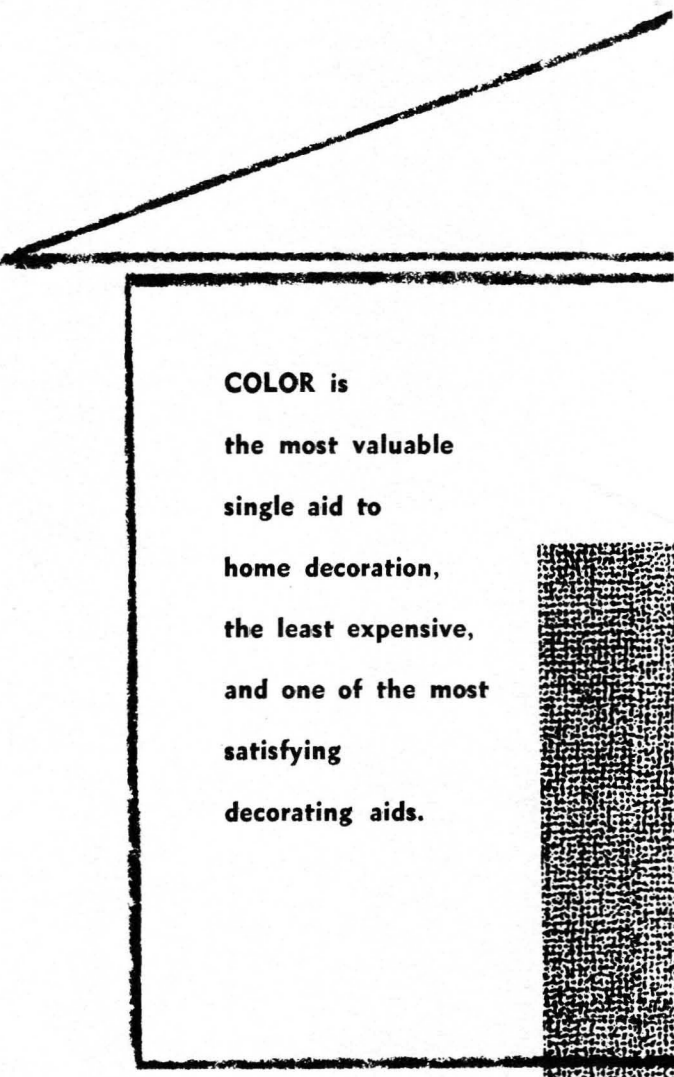


# COLOR PLANS for your Home

**VERA Y. REID**

**Specialist in Home Management and Home Furnishings**

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
University of Hawaii  
Home Economics Circular 324



**COLOR is  
the most valuable  
single aid to  
home decoration,  
the least expensive,  
and one of the most  
satisfying  
decorating aids.**

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# COLOR PLANS FOR YOUR HOME

By Vera Y. Reid

Specialist in Home Management and Home Furnishings

WITH GOOD COLOR alone, you can create a lovely room. With bad color combinations, you can spend thousands of dollars for rugs and custom-made furniture and impair their beauty completely.

The odds are great against this happening to you because regardless of your background or education, you know, or can easily learn, as much about color as you need. The difficulty, if any, is in organizing your unused knowledge into a sound plan and putting it to work.

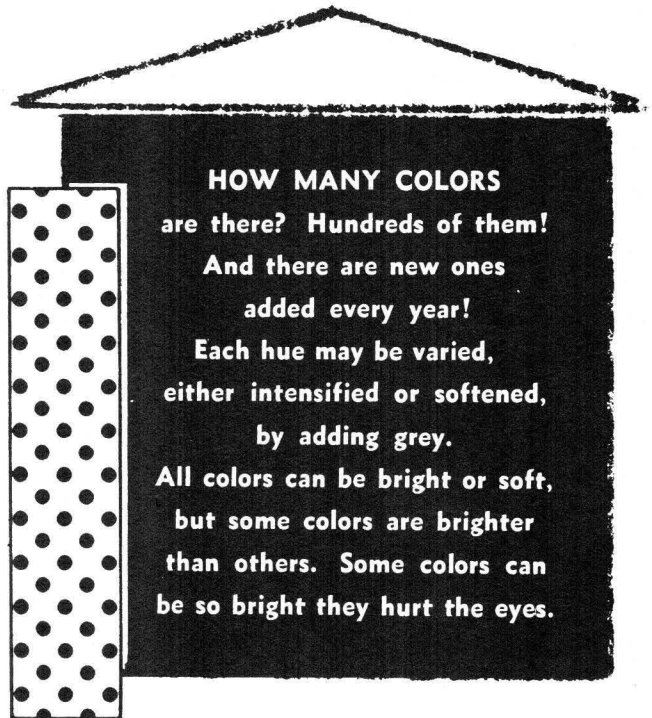
FROM THE MOMENT you are born,  
you live and play and work surrounded by color.  
Outdoors, indoors, wherever you may go,  
it is a most important visual sensation. Unconsciously,  
you absorb color lessons from the life around you  
and learn color harmony from seeing it in nature.

Your color preferences directly influence  
manufacturers. Millions of dollars are invested  
to satisfy your preferences, to the extent of  
giving you colored sinks, refrigerators, and ranges.

IN SPITE OF THIS, you may become frightened  
when planning a decorating job.

You may forget that you are doing nothing new,  
nothing you haven't done a hundred times before.

TRUST YOUR EXPERIENCE and your instinct.  
When decorating your home, use the same procedures  
you use in choosing color accessories for a suit  
or a dress, or in selecting skirt 'n blouse combinations.



**HOW MANY COLORS**  
are there? Hundreds of them!  
And there are new ones  
added every year!  
Each hue may be varied,  
either intensified or softened,  
by adding grey.  
All colors can be bright or soft,  
but some colors are brighter  
than others. Some colors can  
be so bright they hurt the eyes.



### **INTENSE and SOFT colors . . .**

Kelly green, for instance, is an intense color; beige is soft. Keep in mind this rule for using bright and soft colors.

Soft colors should be used on walls, floors, woodwork, and ceiling, because these are the largest spaces in the house and should appear as background for lovely furniture.

Bright colors, if you want or need them, can appear on the smaller areas, such as a chair, draperies, or accessories.

### **WARM and COOL colors . . .**

We immediately sense when a color is warm or cool. Colors often affect us emotionally. Some persons are more sensitive to colors than others, but nearly everyone is conscious of some emotional response to color.

*Yellow* suggests the heat-giving sun.

Thus it is a warm color.

It is also a cheerful color. It brings life and sunshine into a room. Shades of yellow often found besides sunny yellow are cream, ecru, ivory, gold, tan, and brown.

*Red* suggests hot fire. Almost everyone likes some form of red; maybe it's pink, wine, or bright tomato red. It is not always a restful color, but it is stimulating.

Bright reds should be limited to books, pillows, or flowers in fabrics. Sometimes you may want to use it on a small chair.

Softer shades of red can appear in large areas.

Yellow, red, and such warm colors should be used in north or west rooms, with accents of cool colors.

*Blue* reminds us of the cool sky.

*Green* of grass and water.

These are cool colors, and they are best used as the dominant color in south rooms.

**1. Consider your family's likes and dislikes . . .**

Colors in a room express the occupant's personality. The entire family should plan or agree on colors for the living and dining areas.

The homemaker might well have the kitchen as she would like it. For bedrooms, daughters and sons should have theirs in the colors they want rather than colors a decorator or parents want. Perhaps a little guidance for best results is needed.

**2. Remember the use of the room . . .**

Since the living room is occupied by all the family at a time, quiet colors may be the best. Bedrooms can be gay or restful, depending on the wishes of the occupant.

The kitchen and the family rumpus room are used when the family is active, so more bold, gay, and loud colors can be used.

**3. Figure out the effect of windows . . .**

How many windows are there in a room? Rooms with many windows can use greyed colors. Those rooms with only one window and little light need purer and stronger light colors. Since dark walls absorb so much light, the trend is toward light-colored walls rather than very dark ones.

Or are they planned? . . . Let's plan . . .

## COLOR SCHEME

### **4. Check furnishings already on hand . . .**

Take an inventory of your room.

Is the rug to be replaced, or will it be used?

Are the walls in good condition?

Does the woodwork appear in the background?

Does the room have a color scheme?

Do any chairs and sofas need covering?

### **5. Notice the work of experts . . .**

A good color scheme can be built from something already in use or something to be purchased.

Why not make use of an artist's experience and knowledge in combining colors?

An artist worked the color combinations in multi-colored drapery fabrics, slip covers, upholsteries, rugs, wall papers, and pictures.

When you like the color combinations in these, this is a guide that the same colors together in a room would be pleasing to you.

### **6. Decide on the number of colors to use . . .**

Emphasis should be placed on a few colors, usually not more than three in one scheme.

The fewer the colors the more variation of tones you can use. One color should dominate;

the second color is used in lesser amounts;

then the third color is small accent of bright color.

**7. Consider the size and shape of the room . . .**

Colors affect the apparent size and shape of the room. Light paint will make a room look larger, while dark paint will make it look smaller.

If a room is large, the sofa can be made to look larger with light-colored upholstery.

If a room is small, use dark upholstery to make your furniture appear smaller.

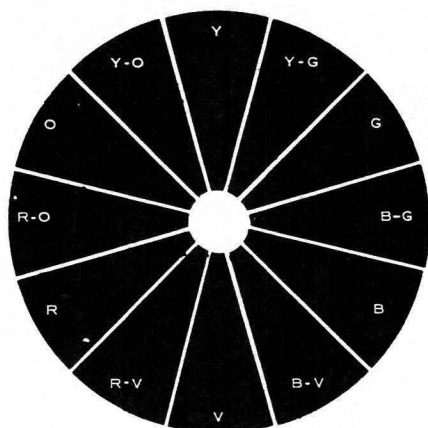
If a piece of furniture matches the color of the wall or the floor, it is less conspicuous.

This is the reason for painting woodwork the color of the walls.

**8. If using patterns or designs, keep them simple . . .**

A safe rule to follow on the designs for each room is to use no more than one design with all the rest plain. Your design may be a large bold one, or a small overall design, or a stripe. Emphasis today is decorating with color and texture rather than with pattern. This helps homes to appear more spacious.

**9. Choose a color scheme . . .**



Y = YELLOW  
Y-G = YELLOW-GREEN  
G = GREEN  
B-G = BLUE-GREEN  
B = BLUE  
B-V = BLUE-VIOLET  
V = VIOLET  
R-V = RED-VIOLET  
R = RED  
R-O = RED-ORANGE  
O = ORANGE  
Y-O = YELLOW-ORANGE



## Monochromatic (one-color) scheme . . .

This is the simplest, often the most sophisticated, and certainly a most modern scheme.

With this scheme you will need strong contrasts, very light tints, together with darker shades.

The textures of your fabrics, rugs, draperies, and upholstery should be paramount—either extremely coarse or very fine.

Any middle course is apt to be dull.

A single color boldly used and complemented with large areas of white or grey or black becomes one of the smartest of all color schemes.

Here are the traditional steps you can take in setting up a monochromatic scheme:

- *Basic color*

Usually light. Used on walls.

Sample: Off-white or oyster-white.

- *Second color*

Deeper and richer value of basic color; if basic is a pastel, second color is a greyed or muted value of the pastel.

Used on rugs mainly.

Sample: Cream or beige.

- *Third color*

Much lighter or much darker value of basic.

Used on major upholstery and draperies.

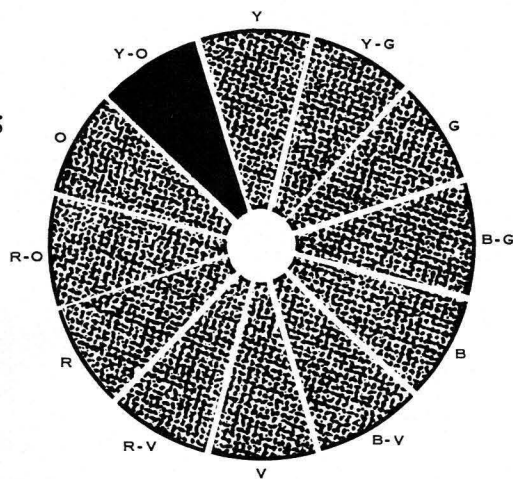
Sample: Brown or cocoa-brown.

- *Fourth color*

Sharp, bright value of the basic color.

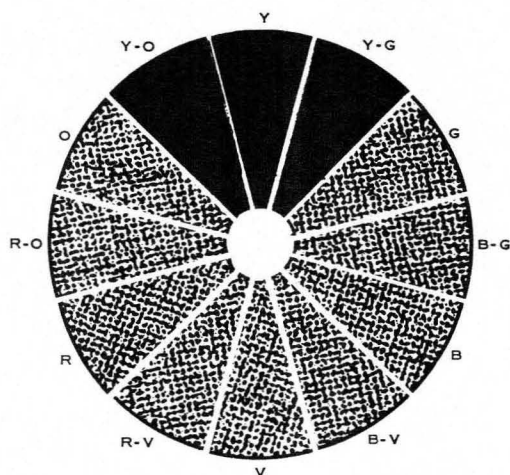
Used in small quantities, for accessories, pillows, small chairs, lamps, ashtrays.

Sample: Orange or tangerine.



### Analogous (adjacent-colors) scheme . . .

The analogous scheme is almost as smart as the monochromatic and is a close second in popularity. It uses colors that are adjacent or side by side on the color wheel. You might start with yellow, then yellow-orange, then orange.



The color steps to take are:

- *Basic color*  
Usually a tint. Used on walls.  
Sample: Pale yellow or jasmine.
- *Second color*  
A darker shade of the basic color.  
Usually used on floors.  
Sample: Yellow-orange or gold.
- *Third color*  
Either light or dark value of a color adjacent to the basic color.  
Used on sofas and chairs.  
Sample: Yellow-green or lime green.
- *Fourth color*  
A tint or shade of the third color.  
Used as accent on accessories.  
Sample: Light lime green or Nile green.

### **Complementary (opposite-colors) scheme . . .**

The complementary color scheme can be stimulating if bright colors are used, or restful if greyed colors are used. The scheme uses two colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel, such as red and green, or blue and orange.

The color steps to take are:

- *Basic color*

Usually a tint or light value of the color selected. Used on walls, ceilings, floors, and windows.

Sample: Pale green or sea foam.

- *Second color*

This color acts as complement of the basic color. Used on main furniture pieces.

Sample: Red-green plaid upholstery.

- *Third color*

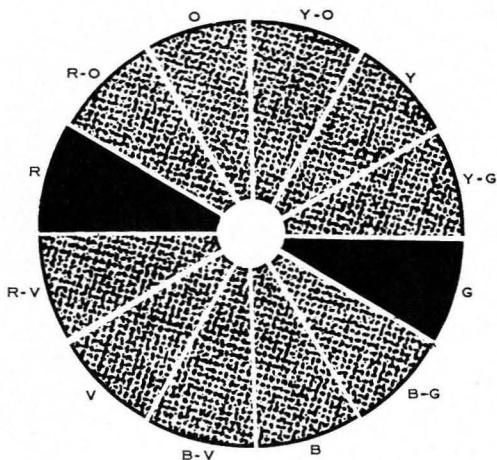
An accent color, either a lighter or darker value of basic or second color.

Used on small furniture and accessories.

Sample: Light or dark green or bright red.

- *Fourth color*

White or black may be added to the two-color combinations above to give added interest.





**Good decorating is not based  
upon unbreakable rules.  
But it cannot succeed if you  
allow the whims and opinions  
of others to take over  
completely.  
Do what you like, and  
with a good plan.  
Keep your long-range plan  
in mind and  
may your decorating be fun!**